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Bush says he doesn't fear rumored threat to family

By Paul Bedard
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Bush said yesterday that threats to him or his family — real or rumor — won't send the first family into hiding.

"I can't do my job if I get deterred by rumors," Mr. Bush said.

Reacting to new reports that Colombian drug lords were planning to sneak into the United States to kidnap one of his five children, Mr. Bush told reporters in an Oval Office interview, "I don't live in fear of anything like this."

"I have confidence in the Secret Service and their ability to do their job."

Newsday reported yesterday that Colombian drug lords have threatened to kidnap one of Mr. Bush's children or senior U.S. officials if they are not granted amnesty. The paper, citing "intelligence sources," said Dorothy LeBlond, Mr. Bush's 30-year-old daughter, was considered the most vulnerable to a kidnapping attempt. She lives in Maine.

Security has been increased

around her and the Bushes four other children: George, John, Neil and Marvin.

Mr. Bush, while noting that "I don't want to mean to be complacent," said the report of the threat isn't true. "I have a feeling that that matter is of enough interest to me that it would have been brought to my attention."

Attempts to confirm Newsday's story were unsuccessful.

Earlier this month, Canadian officials seized several Colombians at the Maine-Canada border and charged them with attempting to stage a jail break of several colleagues being held on drug charges. Their orders, officials said, came from Medellin, Colombia, the cocaine capital of the world.

After the arrest, security was increased around the Bushes. Newsday said the threats surfaced some two weeks after Mr. Bush's Sept. 5 speech declaring a war on drugs.

Mr. Bush said the five children agreed to extra Secret Service protection.